

# Pastore Calls for Full Speed On Defense Missile System

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Sen. John O. Pastore, chairman of the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy, today urged the Johnson administration to move ahead at full speed on a costly anti-ballistic missile system.

The Rhode Island Democrat, generally considered close to administration policies in the past, lashed out at foot-dragging and U.S. reliance on offensive weapons as a deterrent.

"Our offensive weapons are second to none—but it has been our announced and continuing policy for generations never to strike first," he said in a prepared speech.

"Today, in effect, we are asking the American people to be prepared to accept near nuclear annihilation because our strategy calls for absorbing the first nuclear attack."

Pastore was taking part in ceremonies at the launching of the nuclear submarine Narwhal in Groton, Conn.

## Follows Rusk Remark

His speech came just 24 hours after Secretary of State Dean Rusk indicated at a news conference that the United States is growing impatient with the Soviet refusal thus far to talk about halting the latest missile race—the ABMs.

The Soviet Union is deploying one and perhaps two ABMs. The Johnson administration, seeking to avoid a costly new arms race while seeing Red China as a nuclear danger, has sought Russian agreement on a freeze of defensive and offensive weapons. The Soviet Union has agreed to talk, but has not agreed on a date or agenda.

Rusk warned that "time is becoming urgent. We'd like to have talks as soon as possible ... this is a matter of some urgency."

It is understood that the administration has warned the Kremlin that time is running out—if the Russians don't start negotiating soon, the U.S. will have to go ahead with an ABM



SEN. PASTORE

Pastore said hearings on the ABM issue will be held soon by a subcommittee of the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy headed by Sen. Henry M. Jackson, D-Wash.

He noted that the Senate recently approved a budget of more than \$70 billion for defense but still the country has no effective anti-ballistic missile system.

"I realize the cost of this is high — indeed staggering," Pastore said.

In addition, Pastore said the joint committee will pursue the development of such a system with "the same vigor" that it pressed for development of the first hydrogen bomb and the first nuclear submarine.

"However, if we can afford to spend \$24 billion a year in defense of a neighbor, and I mean Vietnam, we can certainly spend as much to insure the life and

security of our American society."

While Congress has approved funds for beginning an anti-ballistic missile system, Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara has refused to go along with the undertaking. More than \$900 million has been made available for preliminary work on an ABM, which could cost up to \$70 billion.

"With all our offensive power," Pastore said, "our defense posture could be our Achilles heel."

"We cannot sit back and let ourselves be lulled into a sense of false security relying only on the hope that fear of retaliation will deter potential aggressors."

## Cites Red Gains

The advances made by the Soviet Union and Communist China in developing thermonuclear power give urgency to the ABM, Pastore said.

The Joint Atomic Committee, he said, has found that the Chinese Communists probably will be able to fire an intercontinental ballistic missile before 1972, and conceivably it could be ready by 1970-71.

He said the time had come to give "serious and urgent thought" to a reappraisal of this country's defense position, and added:

"We cannot live in a world of atomic energy and discount completely the possibility of 'surprise attack' on our nation."

"The security of the country," Pastore said, "deserves the highest national priority."

"And affluent America—with so much to lose—must not face this mortal challenge cheaply," Pastore said. "We should move full speed ahead on building an anti-ballistic missile system."